

HERWIG TREE

"A 'capture operation' is being prepared for the city of Kyiv..."

Actors and practice of forced labor recruitment in Ukraine during World War II

Ukraine as an object of exploitation

The leadership of Nazi Germany showed during the planning phase preceding the invasion of the USSR and during | little interest in Soviet manpower due to the rapid advance in the summer of 1941. Instead, the enormous material resources of the neighboring country to the east aroused the regime's desires. Above all, agricultural goods and energy resources, but also mining products important for the war effort, should make it possible to set up a "blockade solid", self-sufficient "large-scale economy" with Germany as the center. The NS leadership intended in particular to sell foodstuffs without

to confiscate consideration for the locals. As a result, a lot of Soviet civilians should starvation? meeting that envisaged starving "undoubtedly tens of millions of people," as stated at one conference

became. At the center of the policy of exploitation was the economically particularly important Ukraine, which was considered a "breadbasket" from which one conquered

1 Cf. Götz Aly/Susanne Heim, *Vordenker der Vernichtung. Auschwitz and the NS for a New European Order*, Hamburg 1991, p. 334.

2 Cf. Alex J. Kay, *Germany's State Secretaries. Mass Starvation and the Meeting of*

2 1941, in: *Journal of Contemporary History* 41 (2006) 4, pp. 685-700, here p. 699

3 Memorandum about the outcome of today's discussion with the state secretaries about Barbarossa dated May 2, 1941, abdr. in: *Trial of the Major War Criminals before the International Military Tribunal, Nuremberg 14 November 1945-1 October 1946*,

Nuremberg 1948 (IMT), Vol. 31, Doc. 2718-PS, p. 84.

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supposedly effortlessly get out large amounts of grain. Hitler himself had already stated in August 1939 that the Reich could permanently avoid being "starved" if it owned the Ukraine.' Local workers were initially only relevant to the National Socialist leadership to the extent that they manufactured or supplied the products required in the territories to be conquered.

Even after the start of the attack, the deployment of Soviet workers in the German economy was not planned. The dictator himself initially expressly forbade the use of "Russian" prisoners of war in the Reich.' In addition to the racist ideology against the supposedly inferior Slavs, the decisive factor was the conviction that the German military could quickly end the war against the Soviet Union victoriously. By the fall of 1941, however, it was evident that combat operations on the Eastern Front would be protracted. At the same time, the need for workers in the German wartime economy grew steadily

stronger. Under these circumstances, the previous policy was gradually revised under pressure from Goering's Four-Year Plan Authority, the Reich Ministry of Labor, the Military Economics and Armaments Office of the Wehrmacht High Command, individual business associations and armaments companies.

On October 31, 1941, Hitler approved the "large-scale use" of Soviet prisoners of war "for the needs of the war economy," and a week later Goering issued guidelines that were to regulate the use of labor from the USSR.⁴ The precedent⁵ that workers from the be

4 Cf. Carl]. Burckhardt, *Meine Danziger Mission 1937-1939*, Munich 1960, p. 384.

5 Cf. Minutes of a meeting in the Military Economics and Armaments Office of the Wehrmacht High Command on July 4, 1941, abdr. in: IMT, Vol. 27, Doc.

1199-PS, §.63 f.

6 Cf. Ulrich Herbert, *Fremdarbeiter. Policy and practice of the "foreigners" in the war economy of the Third Reich*, Berlin/Bonn 1985, p. 134 ff.

7 Cf. *ibid.*, §. 141 f. On the revision of the policy, which dispensed with the use of Soviet workers in Germany, see *ibid.*, pp. 137-143.

8 Even before that, however, agricultural workers were predominant out

Lithuania and the district of Bialystok, which is also close to the border, were brought across the East Prussian border. See Christian Gerlach, *Calculated Murders. The German economic and extermination policy in Belarus from 1941 to 1944*, Hamburg 1999, §. 457 f.

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were recruited in a targeted manner in order to be employed in companies relevant to the war economy, Paul Pleiger, general director of the Reichswerke AG "Hermann Göring" and one of the most influential officials in the armaments industry of the Third Reich, received the approval, 10,000-12 Use 000 Ukrainian miners in German mining. In fact, on this basis, however, only 756 workers from the important Kryvyj Rih coalfield were recruited for the Ruhr area.?

Right from the start, Ukraine was the focus of German policy to recruit workers from the Soviet Union for the Reich. A year and a half after the paradigm shift of the German leadership, in the German policy of exploitation, the "Eastern workers" ranked on a par with the particularly coveted ones in relation to the occupied Soviet territories.

agricultural goods. Hitler himself confirmed this at a conference with Alfred Rosenberg, Reich Minister for the Occupied Eastern Territories: "We are subject to the harsh laws of war; this law requires us to get food and labor out of Ukraine. [...] When forced labor is demanded over there in the Ukraine: Our German women also have to work, although on average they are much weaker. When a specific application target is required of people!

We cannot wait for the Ukrainians to come voluntarily, because our production is urgent and cannot be delayed. The Ukraine

gutters have to work.”⁹

⁹ See German economic policy in the occupied Soviet territories from 1941 to 1943. The final report of the Economic Staff East and notes by a member of the Kyiv Economic Command, ed. and in by Rolf-Dieter Müller, Boppard am Rhein 1991, . 318

¹⁰ Copy of a record of a meeting between Hitler and Rosenberg and Koch on May 19, 1943, quoted from: Andreas Zellhuber, “Our administration drives a kata

Verse to ...” The Reich Ministry for the occupied Eastern Territories and the German occupation rule in the Soviet Union 1941-1945, Munich 2006, 5. 295.

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The actors of the employment administration

Ukraine was not only the economically most important, but also the territorially largest Soviet republic, which was completely occupied by Axis troops during World War II. Territories on the western periphery of the Ukrainian SSR (in the borders of June 1941) were assigned to the General Government slammed, while in the south-west between the Dniester and the southern Bug, Romanian offices set up the “Province of Transnistria.”¹¹ However, the majority of Ukrainian territory was administratively divided into two: the eastern areas closer to the front remained under military administration throughout the occupation period, with the western part adjoining The civilian-administered Reichskommissariat Ukraine (RKU) encompassed significant parts of the western, southern and central areas of the occupied Soviet republic.

According to this structure, different authorities were tasked with mobilizing the local population to work for the purposes of the occupying power. In the army's area of operations, the institutions of territorial military administration became active, i.e. the commanders of the rear army areas (“Berück”) and the commanders of the rear army areas (“Korück”). On the ground they were represented by the field and local commanders, who made special efforts to recruit local workers for their own needs.¹ In addition, the Economic Organization East, an independent civil-military mixed administration, operated in the military administration area.¹

¹¹ In 1940, 68% of the iron ore, 50% of the coal and 25% of the grain of the Soviet Union were mined or produced in the Ukrainian SSR. See Tanja Penner, Working for the Enemy at Home - Labor Deployment in Occupied Ukraine

1941-1944, in: Yearbook for Economic History (2004) 1, 5. 65-94, here \$. 65 f.

12 Nevertheless, German authorities retained important rights there and were active in numerous political fields between 1941 and 1944.

13 Cf. e.g. B. Jörn Hasenclever, Wehrmacht and occupation policy in the Soviet Union. The Commanders of the Rear Army Areas 1941-1943, Paderborn et al. 2010, p. 408 f.

14 Cf. Dieter Pohl, The Rule of the Wehrmacht. German military crew and native population in the Soviet Union 1941-1944, Munich 2008, p. 65.

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In accordance with the increasing importance of the recruitment of forced laborers from 1942 onwards, the special work group in the central steering committee, the Economic Staff East, was upgraded to a chief group.¹⁵ The central local organizational units of the Economic Organization East, the economic inspections, were at the level of the army groups (more precisely: with the commanders of the rear army areas).¹⁶ The Economic Inspectorate (WI) South was responsible for the eastern and central Ukraine,¹⁷ whose local tasks were performed by various economic commands. The central player in the economic administration in the south of the eastern front was Major General Hans Nagel, who had already been instrumental in setting up the economic organization in the East. He headed the southern economic inspection from the preparatory phase for the German summer offensive in 1942.¹⁸ At the end of 1941, eight economic commands were under WI Süd, six of which were responsible for Ukrainian territory.¹⁹ In May 1943, WI Süd had five commands. Four of them were stationed on Ukrainian territory, the fifth in Crimea, which was still part of Russia at the time." 3

In the RKU, departments dealing with work were set up at all levels of civil administration. According to a letter from the Reich Commissioner Erich Koch, these were under construction in autumn 1941. At the General Commissariats Brest-Litovsk, Zhitomir and Kyiv, for the three westernmost general districts of the RKU

15 Originally, this was located within the leadership group. See. The German Economic Policy, p. 297.

16 cf. B. Hartmut Schustereit, planning and development of the economic organization east before the Russian campaign "Barbarossa" 1940/41, in: Quarterly publication for social and economic history 70 (1983) 1, p.50-70.

17 From July to September 1942, the South Economic Inspectorate was called Economic Inspectorate B, after which it was called Don-Donetz Economic Inspectorate. Finally, in February 1943, it was renamed the Economic Inspectorate South. See Die deutsche Wirtschaftspolitik, pp. 42-60. i

18 On his person and role, see *ibid.*, pp. 7-10.

19 Cf. *ibid.*, p. 47.

20 In Sumy, Charkiv, Stalino (today: Donec'k) and Cernivcy. See WI South, Staff 1/Id WI Staff East from 1.6. 1943, situation report for May 1943, archive of the Institute for History, Munich (IfZ), MA 1723, p. 571.

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were responsible, the work departments had started their service,
However, they were only wetted with a total of five German forces; a

local workers found no Ver

turn.

The central instance of the local employment administration were the employment offices, which were set up both in the civil and military areas and functioned in the RKU as a service for the area commissariats subordinate to the General Commissariats To base the border areas of the USSR on "departments of the country" "which the economic commands could use for supervisory purposes"? However, this soon proved impossible. As early as July 1941, 25 employment offices with 110 German civil servants were set up in the occupied Soviet Union. The number of these offices increased continuously, reaching a high of 174 in the military administration area at the beginning of 1943 (out of around 500 in the entire occupied Soviet Union). Even when this number was reduced due to the loss of territory, the workforce was initially increased further to 674 German workers in July 1943."

On March 21, 1942, the office of the General Plenipotentiary for Labor Deployment (GBA) was established as the central control body of the labor administration, headed by the Gauleiter of Thuringia, Fritz Sauckel.

Above all, this should organize "the mass bringing of foreigners [...] to Germany" and there for their "maximum exploitation"

21 Letter from the Reich Commissioner for the Ukraine to the Reich Minister for the Occupied Eastern Territories dated November 23, 1941, re. Organization of Labor Administration in the Occupied Eastern Territories, Archives of the US Holocaust Memorial Museum, Washington(USHMM), RG-31.002M, Reel 4 (cf. also Central State Archives of Ukraine, Kyiv, Tsentral'nyi Derzhavnyi Arkhiv Vyschykh Orhaniv Vlady Ta Upravlinnia Ukrainy, Kyiv (TSDAVO), 3206-4-6, p. 5 ff.). I would like to thank Kateryna Kobchenko for the research in the Central State Archives and the relevant documents.

22 Undersecretary Dr. Rachner, The Labor Deployment in the Occupied Eastern Territories, in: Reichsarbeitsblatt, TV, 22 (1942) \$7. 130-133, here \$. 130

23 Cf. German Economic Policy, p. 299.

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worries." At the same time, however, the existing administrative and military institutions did not lose their competencies, which led to the formation of parallel structures. This was reflected in the tendency towards National Socialist

scher administration to train polycratic decision-making structures, also down to the department of work. The "work deployment commissions" worked on site for the GBA. Their area of responsibility overlapped with that of the employment offices, which resulted in repeated disputes over competence. Sauckel had been authorized to appoint his own Bea for certain regions, who were supposed to protect the interests of his office there. In this way, from 1943 he succeeded in establishing the Thuringian state farmer leader, Staatsrat Rudolf Peuckert, as the central actor in labor policy in the occupied USSR. This became Sauckel's representative | RKU and at the same time led the main departments of work (or work related to social administration) both in the administration of the Reich Commissariat and in the Reich Ministry for the occupied Eastern Territories. Rounded off Peuckert's position of power based on a "fourfold personal union" when he was also appointed "Commissioner for Labor Deployment in the (entire) occupied Eastern Territories" at the beginning of 1944."

The Ukraine represented the absolute focus of labor administration activities. There were fluctuations depending on the military and operational situation: The Soviet advance in the south of the Eastern Front after the Battle of Stalingrad meant that eleven "work assignment offices"⁵ were closed in the winter of 1942/43." After the German associations had been able to stabilize their positions in the spring and early summer of 1943, the number of employment offices remained constant, while at the same time the number of Nel offices set up at rayon level was continuously increased: while in May there were 87, in June 109 and in July 1%

24 Cf. Herbert, Fremdarbeiter, p. 153.

25 See Gerlach, Morde, S. 466

26 Cf. Zellhuber, "Our administration is driving towards a catastrophe...", p. 297.

27 Cf. WI Süd situation report for February 1943, IfZ, MA 1723, Bl. 6.

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118 extensions active. At the same time, the deployment of German personnel increased as follows:"®
2/1943 224

The reason for the ongoing increase in personnel lay in the intensification

611943 | 711943
300| 310

4/1943
258

5/1943
282

| 11943

118 |

Month
German Forces |

efforts of higher-ranking German departments. Demands for workers for the "Reich employment" increased as well as for those for local needs in the sense of the German occupiers. For the same reason, more and more sub-stations were set up to strengthen the occupying power's access to the rayons as well."

The structures of the labor administration were only dismantled when, from the summer of 1943, the military initiative finally passed to the Red Army. The outstanding importance of the Ukrainian industrial areas meant that the Soviet leadership initially forced the advance on the southern flank of the Eastern Front. The WI Süd reported that as a result of the Soviet counter-offensive from the Kursk-Orel area, four employment offices, including the one in Charkiv, "remain closed" for August 1943. A month later, the loss of a large part of the "remaining area of the Wi Reported in South"; the "labor deployment administration east of the Dniester was therefore subject to dissolution".

Local collaborators, however, always formed the personnel basis of the recruitment policy, regardless of whether they were employed by the employment offices themselves, the local government or the local auxiliary police. Locals were far in the majority at the employment offices: as early as November 1941, the RKU had a total of 20 Germans and no fewer than 175 local employees, of whom

28 Cf. WI Süd situation reports for February, May, June, July 1943, *ibid.*, p. 6,270 and 689, and *ibid.*, MA 1724, p. 62.

29 See Gerlach, *Morde*, S. 450

30 WI Süd situation report for August 1943, IfZ, MA 1724, Bl. 105.

31 WI Süd situation report for September 1943, *ibid.*, p. 142.

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144 people in Kyiv alone." "In the entire military administration area, the number of local employees rose from 1,789 to 3,177 in the period from January to July 1943." The communal, city and rayon administrations regularly consisted exclusively or predominantly of local staff. These lower administrative levels not only played the decisive role in a recruitment method in which forced labor quotas were imposed on the municipalities. Even the registration of workers, which formed the basis of the activities of the labor administration, would have been an impossible task for the occupying power if the locals had not participated. A large number of Soviet citizens showed themselves willing to cooperate, since this, in addition to material advantages (better

Salaries, higher food rations) also brought with it the opportunity to protect oneself and relatives from the terror of the occupying power and deportation to Germany for forced labor."

The recruitment of forced laborers would have been unthinkable without the executive organs of the occupying power, that is, in addition to the military departments, the Himmler SS and police apparatus, which also controlled the militias made up of local collaborators the importance of the armed forces. German security and order police, gendarmerie, security police and SD were regularly actively involved in the deportation of forced laborers, occasionally police battalions and the Ukrainian security teams, which usually provided the bulk of the personnel. The services of the respective commanders of the security police and the SD (KdS) were often on site,

Kalaie Eastern Territories from November 23, 1941, USHMM, RG-31.002M, Reel 4.

33 Cf. German Economic Policy, p. 299.

34 Further motives, which are not relevant here, lay in the political Ser in particular in the proximity of numerous collaborators to a radical Ukrainian nationalism, as represented by the organization of Ukrainian nationalists, Or hanizacija Ukraïns'kykh Nacionalistiv (OUN). See Markus Eikel,

division of labor and crime. The Ukrainian local administration under German occupation 1941-1944, in: Timm C. Richter (ed.), War and Crime. Situation

and intention: case studies, Munich 2006, pp. 135-145, especially \$. 143 ff

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Commander of the Order Police (BdO) or the Commander of the Order Police (KdO), who reported to the Higher SS and Police Leader Hans-Adolf Prützmann responsible for the Ukraine."

forced labor in Ukraine

As early as the summer of 1941, the occupying power began to use force to mobilize local workers for their own purposes. As early as July 1941, Jews living in the occupied territories were the first to be affected. They were grouped together in forced labor gangs and treated with particular ruthlessness. Their assassination often followed in the coming weeks or months. Next, the unemployed came under the scrutiny of the occupation authorities, who used them primarily for harvesting or road construction. Those who refused were threatened with draconian penalties." At first, local and field commands often acted on their own initiative in their respective areas of responsibility, but in October 1941 the quartermaster general responsible for this, Eduard Wagner, stipulated the leading role for the military administration area for the labor offices set up by the economic inspection departments."

As early as August 1941, the Reich Minister for the Occupied Eastern Territories had ordered non-Jews between the ages of 18 and 45 to "work" and Jews between the ages of 14 and 60 to "work". This regulation was adopted by the Economic Organization East and therefore also applied in the theater of operations."* The one for the Ukraine

35 For examples of the role of the SS and police apparatus, see Markus Eikel,

"Because there are no people." The German recruitment and deportation of forced laborers in the occupied territories of the Ukraine 1941-1944, in: Journal of History 53 (2005) 5, S. 405-433.

36 Cf. B. Pohl, Dominik, p.306 f.

37 Cf. Hasenclever, Wehrmacht, S. 318

38 Cf. Ordinance on the introduction of the obligation to work of December 19, 1941 in the version of the Amending Ordinance of August 27, 1942, abdr. in: IMT, Vol. 29, Doc.

1975-PS, p. 186 ff. On the incorrect date of this legal provision, see Gerlach, Morde, p. 452, note 19.

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The valid implementation order that Koch issued at the beginning of November 1941 stipulated that the employment offices had to decide on the type and duration of the respective service obligation and could also impose corresponding conditions on the local municipalities."

The occupying power put the residents under pressure in many ways in order to actually receive the ordered work. For example, the purchase of food was made dependent on possession of a work book or a worker card. Local government, building managers and janitors were ordered, under threat of fines, to denounce people who tried to evade their work obligations. "Objectors" were sent to forced labor camps, often also referred to as "labor education camps", occasionally even shot by units of the local security police/SD. "to set up the forced camp as soon as possible", in which "disloyalty to work" should be held." |

Conscriptions were issued for a variety of jobs within Ukraine, but especially for those that were physically demanding, sometimes dangerous, or that the occupying power had a special interest in carrying out. For a functionary of the German military apparatus, the infrastructure was in his own back! really important. Accordingly, a large number of locals were employed in "transportation (railway, road and bridge construction), for mud and snow clearance [...], for the expansion of airfields, motor vehicle repair shops". In the winter of 1941/.

39 Cf. First order to implement the decree of the Reich Minister for the occupied eastern territories of August 5th. 1941, USHMM, RG-31.002M, reel 4

40 Cf. E.g. letter from WI Süd, Staff I/Id to WI Staff East dated 1.8. 1943, situation report for July 1943, IfZ, MA 1724, p. 63.

41 Cf. letter from the employment office to the city commissioner of Kyiv dated January 30, 1942, January 1

DAVO, 3206-2-185, sheet 2; Resolution No. 239 of the Mayor of Kyiv 9.12. 1941, *ibid.*, 3206-2-193, p. 34 f.; Eikel, "Because people are missing", \$. 409

42 Letter from the General Commissioner to the SD of January 8, 1942, TSDAVO, 3206-2-19 Bl. 17.

43 German Economic Policy, p. 301.

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women with their children and older people - sometimes under beatings - were also forced to do winter service; those who refused were shot." Korück 550, who was responsible for the rear of the 17th German army stationed in the Donets region, ordered that male and female civilians be used for road maintenance "if necessary with the application of the severest penalties". The XXXIV, subordinated to the 17th Army. Army corps even forced locals to lay mines." The largest infrastructure project in occupied Ukraine was the construction of thoroughfare IV (DG IV). From the beginning of 1942, this was to open up the strategically important Lviv-Ternopil'-Vinnycja-Kirovohrad Dnipropetrovsk supply line and further towards the Caucasus. Prützmann was entrusted with the overall management of the project, for which the SS and Organization Todt shared responsibility. The workers were recruited and guarded by the "Police Security Department DG IV". This had been formed within Himmler's apparatus and was supported by collaborators organized into Schutzteam battalions, most of whom came from the Ukraine and the Baltic States.' In 1942, in addition to 10,000 Jews and 50,000 prisoners of war, 50,000 forced laborers from the local population had to build the road."

In the spring of 1943, WI Süd reported to DG IV that "a total of 16,000 men were needed, of which 12,000 could be provided so far". The Ukrainian civilians had been mobilized by the SS and police departments, who threatened to punish all communities located within a corridor of 50 km around the planned course of the route, by providing numbers of workers to be provided. Equal

44 Cf. Pohl, *Herrschaft*, p. 307.

45 Cf. Manfred Oldenburg, *Ideology and Military Calculation. The occupation policy of the Wehrmacht in the Soviet Union in 1942*, Köln/Weimar/Vienna 2004, \$. 241 f.

46 Cf. Hermann Kaienburg, Jewish labor camps on the "Straße der SS", in: 1999.

Journal for Social History of the 20th Century 11 (1996) 1, pp. 13-39, here pp. 20 ff.; Andrej Angrick, *Forced Labor along the "Straße der SS"*, in: *Forced and Slave Labor in Nazi-Dominated Europe*, ed. from USHMM, Center for Advanced Holocaust Studies, Washington 2004, pp. 83-93, \$ here. 83 ff.

47 Cf. Kaienburg, *Jewish Labor Camp*, \$. 25

48 WI Süd situation report for April 1943, IfZ, MA 1723, p. 491.

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At the time, no workers were allowed to be withdrawn from this area for "Reich employment". In this way, it was possible to force a large part of the locally available working population to build the road.

Overall, the lot of the local forced laborers was not as hard as that of the prisoners of war housed in camps or even of the Jews, most of whom were later murdered. After all, the local Ukrainians could return to their place of residence every day. They were paid on a piece-work basis and occasionally also received certain amounts of scarce goods such as tobacco, sugar or textiles. Despite this, the harsh working conditions imposed on them resulted in fatalities."

There were also forced "redistributions of labour" within the occupied areas:" In the spring, the RKU planned to use several hundred thousand "migrant workers" from urban areas in the important agricultural areas of southern Ukraine. In fact, about 50,000 residents of Kiev were deported in this connection."

In the course of 1942 the pressure on the local workers increased. The German authorities endeavored to set up armaments-related production in occupied Ukraine, while at the same time ever increasing demands were made for workers for use in the German Reich. In addition, numerous Jewish workers had already been murdered. In many cases, local consumers now competed with Sauckel's advertising commissions, which were primarily interested in deporting as many people who could work to Germany as possible. For example, the powerful Berg- und Hüttenwerksgesellschaft mbH Ost was able to assert itself with its demand to impose a recruitment freeze for the employees of the Nikopol' manganese industry, which it controls.'?

49 See Angrick, *Forced Labour*, §. 87

50 Cf. Christian Gerlach, *The Recruitment of Forced Laborers in the Occupied Soviet territories*, in: Wolfram Wette/Gerd R. Ueberschär (eds.), *War Crimes in the 20th Century*, Darmstadt 2001, pp. 193-207, here §. 199

51 Cf. Karel C. Berkhoff, *Harvest of Despair. Life and Death in Ukraine under Nazi Rule*, Cambridge/London 2004, pp. 264 f.; Eikel, "Because the people are missing", §. 420

52 Cf. Matthias Riedel, *Mining and iron and steel industry in the Ukraine under German occupation (1941-1944)*, in: *Quarterly Journal for Contemporary History* 21 (1973) 3,

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The shortage of labor supply led to increased mobilization efforts. This resulted in an escalation of violent measures against people who refused to work for the occupiers. These efforts were also reflected in an ordinance issued in February 1943, which extended the "duty to work" in the military administrative area to men and women between the ages of 14 and 65. The opportunities for free choice of job were significantly curtailed, while the implementing regulations allowed not only the field and local commanderships but also the employment offices to punish employees with "instruction to a work education camp." Generally Germans tried

departments to achieve improvements in performance, among other things, by taking increasingly rigorous action against disciplinary violations.

In the months before the Red Army recaptured large parts of Ukraine, Wehrmacht agencies made particularly excessive use of the opportunity to use local forced laborers for military purposes. In order to fend off the Soviet advance in the winter of 1942/43, WI Don-Donets calculated that 50,000 entrenchment workers would be needed in their area of responsibility in January 1943 alone."

In the spring of 1943, the Economic Command 15 in the hard-fought Kharkiv identified an "additional need for 25,000 workers" that could be "covered up to 7,215". The Kempf army department alone called for 10,000 people to build an "all-round fortification" around the eastern Ukrainian city. At the same time, however, in Sumy the Economic Command 103 "for a peat cutting operation [...] 4000 workers in agreement with the district and district farmers and the advertising agency

pp. 254-284, here \$. 266; Tanja Penter, Forced Labor in the Donbass under Stalinist and National Socialist Rule, 1929 to 1953, in: Hans-Christoph Seidel/ Klaus Tenfelde (eds.), Forced Labor in Europe of the 20th Century. Coping

and comparative aspects, Essen 2007, \$. 227-252, here \$. 246 f.

53 Cf. Ordinance on compulsory labor and deployment of labor in the operational area of the newly occupied Eastern Territories of February 6, 1943 as well as implementation regulations, BArch MA Freiburg, RH 24-29, no. 149, also abdr. in: The German Economic Policy, Appendices 63 and 64, \$499-512.

54 See situation report WI Don-Donetz for January 1943, IfZ, MA 1723, p. 10.

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mission [...]° In the coming months the mobilization of the local population for the construction of positions and fortifications in the militarily administered part of the Ukraine reached its peak. In June 1943 no fewer than 210,000 workers were employed for this purpose forces used."

The forced labor deportations to the German Reich

When the German leadership decided to deport forced laborers from the Soviet Union to the Reich on a large scale, the general economic conditions in the Ukraine initially seemed favorable for this: During their retreat, Soviet agencies had either dismantled or destroyed numerous industrial plants or caused them to be destroyed or removal of individual components rendered unusable. In the iron industry of the Dnieper Bend, for example, when the German units conquered the original 26,500 electric motors there were only 2,500 left, which paralyzed the majority of the factories. Blasting and fires, either set by Soviet units or as a result

which broke out had contributed to the destruction of the economy and infrastructure. As a result, there was high unemployment in the months following the German invasion of the occupied eastern territories. At the same time, however, a large proportion of the able-bodied men had been drafted into the Red Army and at least ten million people, above all administrative officials and specialists of all kinds, had been evacuated. Numerous residents of the western USSR had also started to flee from the occupiers on their own initiative. In the Donbass, around 80 percent of the unskilled workers, but only around 30 percent of the skilled workers, stayed on site.⁵⁶ Hence the conclusion

55 WI South situation report for May 1943, *ibid.*, p. 571.

56 Cf. WI Süd situation report for June 1943, *ibid.*, p. 692.

57 Cf. Josef Werpup, *Goals and practice of the German war economy in the Soviet Union, 1941 to 1944*, illustrated by individual branches of industry, Bremen 1992, p. 66.

58 Cf. Riedel, *Bergbau*, p. 252.

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report of the Economic Staff East that on the labor market in the "occupied eastern territories there were large human reserves available for use in the Reich".⁵⁷ Unemployment was a main problem of the labor administration,⁵⁸ it was therefore to be assumed that without too much pressure numerous workers could be recruited for work in the German Reich. In this context, however, the term voluntariness can only be used with strong reservations, since many people only contacted the recruiters to explain the miserable living conditions in their homeland, which are characterized by hunger, a lack of all essential goods, insufficient medical care and the omnipresent terror of the occupiers. The occupation authorities gave the unemployed either no food at all or only inadequate allocations. At the end of 1941, people who were not employed were only allocated 100 grams of wheat per day in the area of responsibility of the 17th Army.⁵⁹ In Kharkov, the destruction of residential buildings and factories makes the population more receptive to advertising.⁶⁰ There are indications that in individual cases people who had particular fears of the National Socialist policy of annihilation - such as Jews or Soviet officials - tried to cite a false identity to the forced labor transports.⁶¹ If this succeeded, the danger to life for the people concerned in the Reich would actually have been lower than in Germany

occupied Soviet Union.

59 German Economic Policy, p. 318.

60 See Gerlach, *Morde*, S. 453.

61 Cf. Oldenburg, *Ideologie*, p. 231 f.

62 WI Süd situation report for March 1943, *IfZ*, MA 1723, Bl. 125. In Charkiv it was

After the city had been taken by German troops for the first time at the end of October 1941, a massive famine broke out. In early 1943, the eastern Ukrainian metropolis changed hands twice; accordingly, the war damage was particularly high.

63 In Kyiv, for example, "several interpreters" hired "by the commander of the security police and SD in Kyiv" for the "security police review of the

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At the beginning of the occupation, numerous Ukrainians believed the promises made to them that they would be granted good working conditions in Germany, while their relatives who stayed behind would be adequately cared for at home. In the cities in particular, the advertising campaigns, which were accompanied by appropriate propaganda, certainly met with interest. An individual case has been handed down for Kyiv in which 1,800 workers responded to a call from the general commissioner, of whom a few hundred were rejected.'

German agencies also tried to recruit workers from Romanian-occupied Transnistria for work in the German Reich. The fact that numerous German authorities were active in Transnistria during the entire period of occupation initially made the work of the "Odessa Recruitment Commission" easier. After the conquest of the south-west Ukrainian city, the latter probably acted on its own at first. However, a veto by the Transnistrian governor Alexandru Alexianu finally stopped the action in the spring of 1942. The Germans brought the approximately 800 workers who had already been registered into the Reich, but no further activities of this kind took place.'

The situation on the labor market changed over the course of the year

Fundamental in 1942: In view of the protracted war, the occupying power restarted more and more armament-related companies. The original policy of de-industrialization was modified, as was the concept of hunger, which now increasingly affects population groups

Benen workers" were used, "50 come. officials, activists and Jews"

established, whose murder is to be assumed. Commander's situation report

of the Security Police and Security Service Kyiv for April 1942, TSDAVO,

3676-4-475, sheet 15.

64 Cf. Herbert, *Fremdarbeiter*, S. 159

65 Cf. Alexander Dallin, *Odessa 1941-1944. A Case Study of Soviet Territories under*

Foreign Rule, 2nd ed., Iasi/Oxford/Portland 1998, \$. 214. In a letter dated

May 3, 1942, in which the head of the commission notifies the governor of the termination of the activities of his body, at the same time thanks him for his "kind permission", thanks to which the "recruitment of Russians" could be carried out.

Cf. Letter from the Government Councilor H. Donnerhack, Head of the Odessa Recruitment Commission, to the Royal Romanian Civil Governor of Transnistria, Minister Alexianu, May 3, 1942, USHMM, RG-31.004M, reel 2.

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met whom the occupying power thought they could do without or who were undesirable for ideological reasons, such as Jews." In June 1943, according to official information, there were 125,489 job seekers in the area of responsibility of WI Süd, compared to 89,724 vacancies." In addition to the declining numbers Unemployment figures were impacted by the extremely negative news leaking to Ukraine from the workers brought to Germany. Characteristic of the life of the "Eastern workers" in the Reich was the accommodation in "barbed wire

Labor camp[s], insufficient food, lack of warm clothing, low wages, bad treatment', * also "excessive working hours [...], lack of medical treatment, [...] defamation, abuse"" From void The abducted people were severely punished and often killed. The treatment of women who became pregnant in Germany and their children was particularly brutal. Ukrainians, who were mostly allowed to return for health reasons, as well as the inadequately censored letters from the workers, bear witness to the conditions under which those affected had to live were completely inadequate." The occupation authorities tried to use propaganda to counteract the devastating reputation that working conditions in the German Reich soon had. For example, at WI Süd, fake, "positive" letters "from the Reich

66 On the armaments programs see e.g. B. German economic policy, p. 198-209

On the change in the policy of economic exploitation, see Gerlach, Morde, \$371-448.

67 Cf. WI Süd situation report for June 1943, IfZ, MA 1723, p. 692.

68 Summary of descriptions from letters from "Ostarbeiter", situation report WI Don-Donetz for January 1943, *ibid.*, p. 6.

69 Herbert, Fremdarbeiter, p. 288.

70 Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 247-250 and 287.

71 One source speaks of only "130 rubles a month per family, independent from

the number of heads". A kilogram of butter or oil often cost that on the black market multiples of this amount. Reports from the occupied eastern areas of the chief of the Security Police and SD, No. 21 of September 18, 1942, BArch Berlin, R 58, No. 222, Bl. 65-93, here Bl. 81; Penter, Works for the Enemy, p.79 f. Many thanks to Karsten Linne for the sources from the Federal Archives, which he made available to me.

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published in all newspapers of the inspection area""? and sent former "Eastern workers" to public events who had to describe the situation of the deported people in Germany in the rosiest of colors." In a speech he gave to workers in heavy industry in Stalino on May 1, 1943, the head of the Süd Nagel Economic Inspectorate praised the deployment of workers in Germany as a direct means of international understanding: "Through this work in Germany, your comrades expand their horizons and also learn German working methods. But not only that! You see the beautiful German homeland, the blue Rhine and our old castles and towns. At your work in German

country you will also get to know the German people and the German people will learn |

know you. This brings peoples closer together and increases mutual understanding and trust."* Tanja Penter pointed out that the motives of the German mobilization propaganda were based on those used by the Soviet government during the 1930s."

However, these efforts could not change the fact that fewer and fewer workers volunteered over the course of 1942. The situation reports for the beginning of 1943 finally reported consistently that the advertising measures at this point in time were "hardly" successful. for which "the negative attitude of the population against a

Recruitment for work in the Reich" was responsible. It already played a role that at least since the Battle of Stalingrad, many people have not

72 Situation report WI Don-Donetz for January 1943, IfZ, MA 1723, Bl. 6 (quotes *ibid*); Situation report WI Süd for April 1943, *ibid.*, p. 488.

73 ZB,,23 Ostarbeiter come from the Reich for propaganda purposes in the inspection area. Distribution: 10 for Kharkov, 4 for Stalino ...".

War Diary
(KTB) WI Süd, No. 7 from April 1st to April 30th. June 1943, entry for 18.5. 1943, *ibid.*, p. 278.

74 General's speech on May 1, 1943, held on April 30, KTB WI Süd, No. 7, Annex

gene volume 1, *ibid.*, p. 398.

75 Cf. Penter, forced labour, p. 248.

76 Situation report WI Don-Donetz for January 1943, IfZ, MA 1723, Bl. 6; in March it was said that "voluntary reports [...] could no longer be obtained on a significant scale". Situation report WI Süd for March 1943, *ibid.*, p. 125.

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more believed and feared in a German victory, from Soviet ones

Authorities after their return for cooperation with the Deut

to be punished.

However, the National Socialist leadership had already relied on violence from the very beginning of the "Ostarbeiter" recruitment process. Out of racial conceit, she considered it fundamentally inappropriate to court workers from the occupied territories. Under these circumstances, a system based on "advertising campaigns, support payments [for relatives who stayed at home] and terror" was already established in the Ukraine in the first half of 1942.

From mid-April 1942, the number of "voluntary" reports fell steadily. At the same time, Sauckel, who had just been appointed to the GBA, increased the requirement target for the occupied eastern territories. As late as February 1942, Werner Mansfeld, the previously responsible head of the labor group in the four-year plan authority, had demanded 627,000 workers for the entire occupied USSR, of which the Ukraine, with 290,000 land workers and 180,000 industrial workers, was to bear the lion's share." Sauckel tripled the target,"" whereby 360,000 people were to be brought to the German Reich from the General District of Kyiv alone. In October 1942, another 225,000 were requested by the end of the year and the same number by May 1943 from the Reichskommissariat Ukraine alone. The demands were pushed up again in March 1943, when 3,000 workers from the RKU and 1,000 workers from the area of responsibility of WI Süd were to be recruited every day - targets that were doubled from April." By the required number of workers 77 So Göring in January 1942, quoted from: Herbert, Fremdarbeiter, p. 157 f.

78 Cf. Eikel, "Because people are missing", §. 412 f.

79 The advertising is to be promoted "through all suitable measures, if necessary through the strictest application of the duty to work, in such a way that the result of the recruitment can be tripled [emphasis in the original] in the shortest possible time". Telex from Sauckel to Reich Commissioner Koch dated April 2, 1942, TSDAVO, 3206-2-6, sheet 1.

80 Cf. on this telephony from the head of the WI staff east to the inspector of WI south on 11.3. 1943, abbreviated in: Criminal Goals - Criminal Means!
Documents of the occupation policy of fascist Germany on the Ter

ritorium of the USSR, ed. by GF Sastavenko et al., Moscow 1963, Appendix No. 113, p. 301 f.

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cal departments applied a pay-as-you-go procedure: higher-level authorities passed the calculated requirement on to the regional administrative units on site, which then had to recruit the appropriate number of forced laborers within a specified period. For example, Sauckel demanded

At the beginning of September 1942, an additional 500,000 Ukrainians were to be employed as household helpers in Germany. The Economic Command of Kharkov had to provide 2,000 people and three women workers for each village under its responsibility. On the lower level, this had to be done by the local authorities and the executive forces in the occupied area, mostly the local auxiliary police and the German offices of Himmler who managed them police apparatus to put. Rayon chiefs, mayors and village elders (staroste) were subjected to considerable pressure to meet the quotas imposed on them.

Occasionally they were even threatened with the death penalty if they failed in the opinion of the German authorities superior to them." Field and local command posts were z. T. also actively involved. These guarded and organized transports; an order from Quartermaster General Wagner of May 10, 1942 included them in the recruiting measures of the GBA's advertising commissions."

In order to achieve the high and ever-increasing targets

able, the occupation apparatus increasingly used violence. The local administrations had to draw up lists of the people to be deported. If they did not report to the prescribed collection points, they were forcibly taken. For example, at the employment office in Nizyn, which belonged to the Economic Detachment 104 based in Cernihiv, "3-400 forced demonstrations a day were not uncommon". The houses and yards of people who had been scheduled for deportation but had fled were confiscated, if they existed, and occasionally also taken

ignites. The relatives of the fugitives also had to fear penalties.

81 Cf. Eikel, "Because the people are missing", p. 416.

82 Cf. Berkhoff, Harvest, p. 261.

83 Cf. Oldenburg, Ideologie, p. 243.

84 Letter from WI Süd, Staff I/Id to WI Staff East, situation report for July 1943, IfZ, MA 1724, Bl. 62.

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The district commissioner responsible for Vasyl'kiv, Paul Raab, justified the "measure of burning down houses" by saying that this "was expressly proposed as a coercive measure in a secret letter from the Reich Commissioner for Labor Deployment". Fritz Müller, district commissioner from Kremenech, described it such an action: "In order to ensure that the German administrative orders were respected, the undersigned himself went to the districts intended for the levying of workers and carried out the enlistment of workers for 3 days with a special commando consisting of 11 Germans and 20 protection teams[.]. In the villages almost only old people were found. Persons able to work had fled the village when they heard about the arrival of the special commando. Only when 25 houses were burned down in the various rayons was it possible to ensure that workers were sent to the assembly points." -man-counting" won."

Was able to do the target required by local departments even with these

methods are not fulfilled, the occupying power proceeded to the indiscriminate deportation of persons who happened to be found. The recruiting measures degenerated into the frequently described "manhunts".⁸⁶ German police and local collaborators carried out raids and night searches of houses, during which often everyone in the household who was able to work, including guests or mothers with small children

85 Letter from Paul Raab to Rosenberg dated June 7, 1944, reprinted in: Criminal Targets, Appendix No. 122, pp. 324-327.

86 Copy of a letter from the district commissioner in Kremianets, government councilor Fritz Müller, to the general commissioner for Volhynia and Podolia, Dept. II b/d, dated October 12. 1942, BArch Berlin, R 6, No. 79, Bl. 1 f., here Bl. 1.

87 The population of a village was rounded up and counted.

See.

Copy of a letter from the Commander of the Security Police and SD in Kyiv, SS-Obersturmbannführer Erich Ehrlinger, to the Commander of the Security Police and SD for the Ukraine, SS-Gruppenführer Max Thomas, dated December 19, 1942, BArch Berlin, R 70 Soviet Union, No. 17, unpag.

88 Situation report by the commander of the security police and security service in Kyiv for July and August 1942, TSDAVO, 3676-4-476, p. 260.

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had, were taken away. Armed forces surrounded entire villages, markets, cinemas, theaters, beaches, even churches, and then combed them. The people found to be able to work were often beaten, and those fleeing were shot at. The unfortunate ones who were captured were often sent to Germany by the relevant authorities with ill treatment, without adequate equipment and food, and without notifying their next of kin." In this context, a German report openly spoke of a "fang action" [quotation marks in the original] that was "prepared for the city of Kyiv" and was to be "carried out with the help of strong police forces".⁸⁸ Due to the weak personnel of the German However, the occupying power reported many of these activities as failures to the security forces. One source notes that in "a large-scale raid in the Podol district [...] the success was disproportionate to the forces deployed". As a way out, they resorted to "a number of smaller raids [...] which required only small forces to check"?!

According to Nagel's instructions, only "auxiliaries" in the service of the Wehrmacht, "key workers in the metal industry", "skilled workers in agriculture" and "employees on the Reichsbahn and in mining" were to be exempted from the deportations at the South Economic Inspectorate.

People who served in the occupying power in the armed units or in the administration could also feel relatively safe. The same applied to their relatives. However, the enormous pressure under which the mobilization of forced laborers was carried out increasingly endangered these groups as well: In the course of 1943, the economic services began to increasingly search companies and authorities for employees.

men who seemed unnecessary from their point of view. In particular, younger people should

89 On the "manhunts" see Herbert, *Fremdarbeiter*, p. Berkhoff, *Harvest*, \$. 259-264; Wendy Lower, *Nazi Empire-building and the Holocaust in the Ukraine*, Chapel Hill 2005, \$. 123 ff.

90 WI Süd situation report for February 1943, IfZ, MA 1723, p. 86.

91 Situation report by the commander of the security police and security service in Kyiv for July and August 1942, TsDAVO, 3676-4-476, p. 403.

92 KTBWI South, No. 7 from April 1-30. June 1943, appendix volume 1, IfZ, MA 1723, Bl. 364

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workers are replaced by 'elderly and stationary'". At the 14th.

On April 1, 1943, a "Commission to Review Labor Deployment" was set up in Stalino by WI Süd, the purpose of which was to release "inappropriately deployed or surplus workers" for "Reich advertising".? As a result of the company audits carried out, On June 1, 1943, only 851 workers were "released" in 39 heavy industry companies in the Donets Basin, but 1,000 workers were "released" in the Stalino city administration alone. To a far greater extent, numerous companies have had their declared labor requirements eliminated or reduced."

From the spring of 1943, the German administration, on the initiative of Sauckel, began obliging entire birth cohorts to serve in Germany. The pseudo-legal basis for such decrees was the "Ordinance on Compulsory Work and Labor Deployment" of February of the same year. In particular, the implementation regulations for this set of rules expressly mentioned deployment in Germany as a way of fulfilling the work obligation.?' In mid-March 1943, Koch ordered "all native residents of the country born between 1923 and 1925 of both sexes to be recruited as soon as possible". Only people who had been expressly permitted to do so by the authorities should be allowed to stay in the country. In addition to the age groups mentioned, those born in 1922 were to be recorded "by name and in a list with precise location information and separated into men and women". The Reich Commissioner warned again that the local rayon chiefs and starosts at Ver

93 The WI Süd described such measures as "refinement of work assignments". See WI Süd situation report for March 1943, *ibid.*, p. 158.

94 KTBWI South, No. 7 from April 1-30. June 1943, appendix volume 1, *ibid.*, p. 367.

95 The cut affected more than 5,000 employees. See WI Süd situation report for June 1943, *ibid.*, p. 691.

96 Cf. Penter, *Working for the Enemy*, \$.75.

97 "As provided for in Section 1, Paragraph 2, it corresponds to the requirements of total war that the work can be demanded on the basis of the duty to work not only within but also outside the operational area without spatial restrictions." Ordinance on the duty to work and deployment in ope

Ration Area of the Newly Occupied Eastern Territories of February 6, 1943 and implementation regulations, p. 1, BArch-MA Freiburg, RH 24-29, no. 149.

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"to be held accountable with all severity"? At about the same time, Nagel ordered similar measures for the area of responsibility of WI Süd.

However, these varied according to the "different work deployment situation" on site: Thus, "in the areas of the Vi Kdos [economic commandos] Kharkov, Tschernigow and Sumy, all male members born between 1923 and 1925, in the area of the Vi Kdo Stalino, however, only the females 1924-1925". In April 1943, however, only 2,300 of the total of 15,568 workers who were sent to the German Reich at WI Süd were "voluntarily conscripted". The corresponding number increased in May to 15,691 out of 29,163. !"

By June, a total of 118,677 people had been drafted, of whom 51,734 were "obligated to the Reich"! had been. Overall, the mobilization campaign was disappointing for the representatives of the occupying power, since many people who were born in

heard that they preferred flight to forced labour. In addition, be

Many able-bodied were already deported or were in the service of the occupying power within the occupied Ukraine. Last but not least, the miserable living conditions in the German-occupied USSR contributed to this

Worn that numerous people for health reasons than not

from a German point of view, the result of the "annual levy" in Kyiv was "devastating", since only 676 forced laborers could be recruited." In August 1943 the

98 Letter from the Reich Commissioner for the Ukraine to the General Commissioners of March 20. 1943, TSDAVO, 3206-2-185, sheet 4.

99 WI Süd situation report for April 1943, IfZ, MA 1723, Bl. 488.

100 Cf. *ibid.*, p. 491.

101 For the area of only four economic commands. See management report WI

South for May 1943, *ibid.*, p. 570.

102 Cf. WI Süd situation report for June 1943, *ibid.*, p. 691.

103 Among other things, tuberculosis, typhus and malaria were rampant. In some cases, the number of sick people alone exceeded the number of people who were judged to be "fit for Reich deployment". See WI Süd situation report for April 1943, *ibid.*, p. 491.

104 Cf. copy of a letter from the commander of the security police and SD in Kyiv to the commander of the security police and SD for the Ukraine, SS-Gruppenführer Max Thomas, dated July 1943, BArch Berlin, R 70 Soviet Union,

No. 17, unpag.

N — it

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Economic Inspection South with the mobilization of those born in 1926 and 1927.⁵ However, the Soviet advance after the Battle of the Kursk Bulge probably saved at least some of these young people from the fate of being deported to Germany.

As early as 1942, the German security forces had begun large-scale operations against the partisans, who now controlled many rural areas. From 1943, economic goals were also pursued with these "large companies". Agricultural products in particular were taken away from the affected areas, and the civilians living there, often as families, were deported to forced labour. People deemed unfit for work were frequently murdered.⁶ The spatial focus of such actions was Belarus; however, some of them also hit Ukrainian territory. For example, in May and June 1943 the SS Cavalry Division, Einsatzgruppe D and the 454th Security Division in southern Polesje carried out Operation Vistula, which also affected the north of the General Commissariat of Zhitomir.

A total of 18,860 people were taken into forced labor."

The WI Süd stated that in March 1943 a large part of the 8,000 workers brought in by the Sumy Economic Command came from "gang areas[n]" that had been "evacuated by the army". At the same time, however, there were complaints that in the district of Cernihiv "extensive retaliatory measures by the SD" had led to the "loss of valuable manpower".⁷ Behind this formulation were the massacres, the units of the SS and police apparatus or the Wehrmacht among the Big companies committed. Over 4,000 locals were killed in Operation Vistula alone, mostly civilians who took part in partisan warfare

were uninvolved."⁸

105 Cf. WI Süd situation report for August 1943, IfZ, MA 1724, p. 105.

106 See generally: Gerlach, Morde, S. 884-1010.

107 In addition, 21,000 head of cattle were captured. See *ibid.*, S. 902 and 1019 f.

108 WI South situation report for March 1943, IfZ, MA 1723, p. 126.

109 Cf. Gerlach, Morde, S. 902 and 1019 f.

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In the course of the German retreat, from the winter of 1942/43, the refugees who left the combat zones in large numbers - some forced, some voluntarily - increasingly became the focus of the German forces.

employment policy. Such tendencies already existing in the occupation apparatus were reinforced when Hitler ordered the evacuation of civilians in February 1943 in order to use them later as workers.¹¹⁰ In connection with the evacuation of the Caucasus and southern Russian territories, around 150,000 people from these areas came under the responsibility of WI Süd. About a third of them managed to "sicker[n]"¹¹¹ on their way, while the others were selected by German authorities according to their ability to work. Reich suitable forces were captured¹¹² and taken to reception camps in Zaporizhzhia, Chortyzja and Dzankoj, to be then either transported to Germany or made available to the local authorities.¹¹³

In the months that followed, the occupation authorities tried to optimize the exploitation of the refugee streams, above all through increased cooperation.¹¹⁴ Large-scale forced evacuations occurred when large parts of the eastern and central Ukraine were evacuated from the summer of 1943. At the beginning of August, 4,500 people were deported from Charkiv. From the Stalino area, "1,000 forced evacuees were accommodated in the Ostarbeiter concentration camp [...] and some were assigned to Reich transport". Overall, WI Süd was disappointed with the recruitment results from eastern Ukraine. In addition to the rapid advance of the Red Army, the fact that the numbers sometimes fell short of expectations was due to the lack of the "necessary military or police forces". In addition, the population massively "evaded the return transport".¹¹⁵ When the area east of the Dnieper was abandoned,

110 Cf. Eikel, "Because the people are missing", p. 418.

111 Cf. The German Economic Policy, p. 326.

112 Cf. WI Süd situation reports for February and March 1943, IfZ, MA 1723, p. 86 and 126
(Quote p. 86).

113 Cf. German Economic Policy, p. 327 ff.

114 WI South situation report for August 1943, IfZ, MA 1724, sheet £105.

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According to German estimates, about 400,000 refugees crossed the river, of whom "about 1/3 could be considered fit for work".¹¹⁶ By spring 1944, Soviet units were also able to recapture the majority of the Reich Commissariat in Ukraine. Several tens of thousands of refugees were taken to transit camps in eastern Hungary, while further south the Romanian gendarmerie handed over numerous people who had fled to their sphere of influence to German authorities.¹¹⁷ Transnistria, which Soviet troops also occupied completely by April 1944, became also 'out of consideration for the political implications', only a few people evacuated. In total, "141,157 workers from the East" were mobilized "from the southern area" of the occupied Soviet Union in the first quarter of 1944 for the Reich deployment, which accounted for a considerable proportion of the labor force deported to Germany during this period.

The conflict of objectives between trying to get as many people as possible to work in the occupied area for their own purposes and using them in the Reich for forced labor could never be satisfactorily resolved from the point of view of the occupying power. Thus there were various frictions between the regional occupation apparatus and the central

Sauckel's authority, which was primarily interested in workers for the Reich. Such conflicts were already indicated in the spring of 1942." Regional military commanders later tried several times to have their area of responsibility blocked for the "Reichswerbung".?° However, such initiatives had only limited success, since Sauckel had access to Hitler and in the

115 WI South situation report for September 1943, *ibid.*, p. 143.

116 Cf. German Economic Policy, p. 330.

117 KTB Army High Command 6, No. 11 from 16.-31. March 1944, entry for 19.3. 1944, BArch-MA Freiburg, RH 20-6, No. 835/. 3, Bl. 98. Although Transnistria was already under German military administration again, German officials wanted to avoid irritation among the Romanian ally.

118 German Economic Policy, p. 331.

119 Cf. Gauleiter Sauckel's report on his trip to Soviet Ukraine dated

26.5.-31.5. 1942, BArch Berlin, R 3901, no. 20029, pp. 25-30.

120 Initiatives by the Commander of the Rear Army Area South, General Erich Friderici, should be mentioned here. See Hasenclever, *Wehrmacht*, \$. 325-338.

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Intervened with the dictator in the sense of the interests he represented.'?! The reservations of the Wehrmacht commanders, however, regularly arose not from humanitarian considerations, but from thinking about military purposes." In general, however, the most diverse German departments worked together efficiently. The disputes over competences between labor deployment commissions and employment offices could be defused through the establishment of joint organizational structures." The very extensive use of the refugee streams to recruit forced laborers in southern Ukraine was facilitated by close cooperation between the "employment offices, [military] refugee staff A and labor deployment staffs of the GBA "" achieved in the reception camps.

Most were within the Reichskommissariat Ukraine

Forced laborers recruited from the city and General Commissariat of Kyiv for the "Reichs Einsatz" from April 1942. According to a German situation report, by the beginning of May alone, "a total of 26,193 people from Kyiv had been taken to the Ar

Deported to the Reich for labor purposes". " Until the end of 1942

half a million people from the RKU came to Germany

by September 1942, 11.1 percent,

from the General District by the middle of next year, 9.7 percent of those there

people who are still alive may have been deported.'?" Especially a lot of work

ter were deported from the Ukraine in the spring and summer of 1942, within the area of responsibility of WI Süd 118,523 in May and 131,404 in June.

121 Eg letter from Sauckel to Hitler dated 10.3. 1943, abbreviated IMT, Vol. 26, Doc. 407 (II)-PS, p. 2 ft.

122 Cf. Hasenclever, Wehrmacht, \$. 338

123 Cf. Gerlach, Morde, \$. 466

124 WI Süd situation report for February 1943, IfZ, MA 1723, p. 86.

125 Situation report by the commander of the security police and security service in Kyiv for April 1942, TsSDAVO, 3676-4-475, p. 13.

126 Cf. Eikel, "Because the people are missing", pp. 406 and 413.

127 Cf. Minutes on the occasion of the visit of Gauleiter Sauckel on August 12, 1942 workshop in the General Commissariat in Kyiv, BArch Berlin, R 70 Soviet Union, No. 17, unpag.; Copy of a letter from the Commander of the Security Police and SD in Kyiv to the Commander of the Security Police and SD for the Ukraine, SS-Gruppenführer Max Thomas, dated July 1943, ibid.

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At this point in time, the occupying power still found an adequate reservoir of manpower that it could use by means of coercive measures. There were also voluntary reports. Later, these possibilities were exhausted, and there was increased demand in the country due to a partial restart of commercial enterprises. The use of locals on site increased massively when Ukraine became the main theater of war again in the course of 1943. There was a further increase in recruitment figures around the turn of the year 1944 as a result of the forced evacuations. In February and March 1944 alone, the number of 56,000 people per month at WI Süd was exceeded again.' Altogether around 2.1 of the around three million forced laborers from the occupied Soviet Union came from the Ukraine, which clearly made this the main recruitment area.' More than half of the deportees were women; the average age of the abducted people was low. Occasionally even children were brought to Germany, as in May 1943 from the Dzankoj refugee camp also "7 children under the age of 12"."

Strategies to avoid deportation to Germany

Only an insignificant proportion of the workers brought into the German Reich left more or less voluntarily. The massive pressure that the OK

exercised coup power over the population in order to be able to recruit workers was one of the main reasons why the mood of the

128 Cf. Overall and individual results of the recruitment of labor by the Economic Staff East for deployment in the Reich (January 1942 - June 1944), in: Die deutsche Wirtschaftspolitik,

Appendix 73, §. 549 f. One year later, despite brutal recruiting methods, WI Süd was only able to achieve a fraction of these numbers, namely 21,271 workers in May 1943 and 11,770 in June. See WI Süd situation reports for May and June 1943, IfZ, MA 1723, Bl.571 and 692.

129 Cf. Penter, Working for the Enemy, §.71. Slightly lower numbers of total deportees in Alexander Dallin, German Rule in Russia 1941-1945. One

Study on Occupation Policy, Düsseldorf 1958, Appendix Table II, p. 465.

130 WI South situation report for May 1943, IfZ, MA 1723, p. 571.

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locals compared to the occupiers." More and more people tried to evade the access of the labor administration. A "legal" option within the occupation system was to "get accommodation in wartime operations". However, since such jobs were not readily available, many people resorted to faking or even causing diseases. Various skin-irritating agents such as vinegar, soda or certain herbal substances were applied to make the person appear to have scabies. Symptoms of the disease were also produced with "tea" prepared from tobacco leaves or by smoking tea leaves. At times, self-harm and self-mutilation became a mass phenomenon in some Ukrainian regions. Since fingers, toes or feet were also cut off and the wounds became infected, this sometimes ended fatally.'? vi

Other methods started with the local employees of the local administration or the auxiliary police. Good relations with the dies N could, for example, prevent people from being put on a deportation list. Bribes were also the order of the day: numerous collaborators agreed if they were given money, gold or foreign currency. scarce goods such as food, alcohol, clothing or even sex services were offered." The screening of potential workers before the deportation had to be carried out regularly by local doctors. Some of them, partly out of altruism, partly against bribes, declared healthy people to be sick. Falsified documents, such as work cards or ID cards, which contained a false date of birth were expensive and expensive.'?

In order to escape the raids, many people stayed outside their usual living environment as often as possible. This situation

131 Cf. eg Hasenclever, Wehrmacht, \$. 325

132 WI South situation report for June 1943, IfZ, MA 1723, p. 689.

133 See Berkhoff, Harvest, \$. 268 f.; Penter, Working for the Enemy, \$. 75

134 Cf. WI Süd situation report for May 1943, IfZ, MA 1723, p. 570; Berkhoff, Harve \$. 268 f.; Hasenclever, Wehrmacht, p. 326.

135 See Berkhoff, Harvest, \$. £270.

"A 'capture operation' is being prepared for the city of Kyiv..."

A German situation report writes: "In order to avoid being drafted, those conscripted often leave their previous workplaces and homes. Sometimes entire families disappear to avoid recourse to loved ones." To recruiters who invaded villages in Luc'k County, they appeared "almost completely empty,"" as the population had fled into the forests.

Escape during the raids, on the march to the assembly point or during the train transport was risky, as the guards often shot at those fleeing. Nevertheless, numerous people managed to escape. According to a German report, "from February 2, 1943 to March 20, 1943 [...] of the 15,900 deployable people loaded in Kyiv, 4,047, i.e. more than 25 percent, escaped."® Fled from individual transports more than half of the deportees."

However, what was probably the most consistent way of evading deportation was active resistance. A large number of young people in particular fled to the Soviet partisans or joined the armed Ukrainian nationalist units of the Orhanizacija Ukraïns'kykh Nacionalistiv (OUN) and its military arm Ukrayins'ka Povstans'ka Armiya (UPA)." The nationalists had collaborated with the Germans in the attack on the Soviet Union and led away

136 WI South situation report for May 1943, IfZ, MA 1723, p. 570.

137 Quoted from: Eikel, "Because the people are missing", \$. 414

138 The report saw one of the causes in the fact that the deportees were taken by vacationers

were guarded who had little interest in this task. See report by SS Obersturmbannführer Erich Ehrlinger of March 25, 1943, partly printed. in: Martin Pabst (ed.), Registered, reported to the police, checked for defense and deployed. The Daspig foreign labor camp near Leuna from 1939 to 1945. Documents and eyewitness reports, Halle (Saale) 2003, \$. 52 f.

139 "Thus it became known that about 300 people escaped from a transport dispatched to the Reich, which was manned by 628 people, near Fastow." Situation report of the commander of the security police and the Kyiv security service for July and August 1942, TsDAVO, 3676-4-476, sheet 406.

140 In the diction of German reports, they fled "to the gangs". See notifications out

the occupied Eastern Territories by the Chief of the Security Police and SD, No. 47 dated

March 26, 1943, BArch Berlin, R 58, No. 224, Bl. 52-71, here Bl. 63 VS.

301

302

Herwig Baum

But in 1942 a "limited war" against the occupiers. This also included the targeted destruction of the occupying power's infrastructure in order to prevent the forced laborers from being collected and transported away.

summary

Contrary to the original plans, the mass mobilization of workers in order to employ them partly in the occupied territories and partly in Germany developed into a key point of German policy of exploitation in the occupied territories of the USSR. The Ukraine was the main recruitment area for forced laborers. There was never a clear decision on the priority of the "Reich employment" or the use of workers in the Ukraine itself, since both were of eminent importance for the war economy of the Third Reich and the functioning of the occupying power .

Disputes within the occupation apparatus did not significantly hamper its efficiency. Even in the case of the recruitment of forced laborers, polycratic structures and an unclear distribution of tasks and competences did not lead to the occupation rule becoming less effective. On the contrary, the cohesion between the individual actors was strong enough to prevent mutual blockades and to ruthlessly mobilize the workforce in Ukraine to be able to decisively influence ongoing processes.

141 Dieter Pohl, National Socialist Persecution of Jews in Eastern Galicia 1941-1944.

Organization and implementation of a state mass crime, 2nd ed. Munich 1997, 5.374.

List of abbreviations

labor education camp

Archiwum Instytutu Pamięci Narodowej, Warsaw

Arhiv Jugoslavije, Belgrade

American Joint Distribution Committee

Akta niemieckich władz, instytucji i osób z czasów okupacji hitlerowskiej - zbiór
szczegółowych zespołów
Archiwum Państwowe w Krakowie

Archiwum Państwowe w Katowicach

Archiwum Panstwowe w Lodzi

Archiwum Panstwowe w Poznaniu

Archiwum Panstwowe w Radomiu

Archiwum Panstwowe w Rzeszowie

Department of labor policy and social administration in the RKO
Archiwum Zydowskiego Instytutu Historycznego w Warszawie

Federal Archives

Federal Archives-Military Archives, Freiburg
Commander of the Order Police

Commander of the rear army area
German labor front

thoroughfare

German People's List

Estonia Rahvusaarhiiv, Tallinn
Immigration Center

General representative for the work assignment
General Government

General Commissioner(iat)

main department

Hugo Schneider AG

Reich Works "Hermann Goering"

Higher SS and Police Leader

Main State Archives

IMG

IMT

KdoO
Kds
Korück
KTB
L.A
LCVA
LVVA
MHP

MWA
NDH
NTN

NV
OKW

RAVSIGUR

RGBI.

zZ 1111 US ALISLILULD UL SLILSEOLELILLILE, IVALLLIUIIGHE olpV

The trial of the main war criminals SKMr before the International Military Tribunal
Nuremberg ss

Trial of the Major War Criminals before the International Military SSPF
Tribunal, Nuremberg StA
Commander of the regulatory police STUAG
Commander of the Security Police and SD SUÜA
Commander of the rear army area TsDAVO
war diary

National Archives US

Lietuvos centrinis valstybes archyvas, Vilnius

Latvijas Valsts vestures archives, Riga

Ministerstvo hospodäfstvi a prece, Minister of Economy and
Labor (Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia)

Minister of Economy and Labor (Protectorate of Bohemia and
Moravia)

Nezavisna DrŽava Hrvatska (Independent State of Croatia)
Najwyższy Trybunał Narodowy

Novo vreme

High Command of the Wehrmacht

Orhanizacija Ukrains'kykh Nationalistiv

Political Archive of the Federal Foreign Office, Berlin

Process Bühlera

Process Greisera

kingdom worksheet

Reich Ministry of Labour

Public Order and Security Administration

at the Ministry of the Interior of the NDH

Reich Law Gazette

Reich Commissioner for the Consolidation of German Nationality
Reichskommissariat Ostland

Reich Commissariat Ukraine

Reich Ministry for the Occupied Eastern Territories

Risky protector, Reich protector
Reich Security Main Office

Race and Settlement Main Office of the SS

Security Service of the SS

nine iin ia anne
Starosta Miasta Krakowa

protection Squad

SS and Police Leader

State Archives

Road and civil engineering company AG

Statni üstfedni archive v Praze

Tsentral'nyi Derzhavnyi Arkhiv Vyschykh Orhaniv Vlady
Ta Upravlinnia Ukrainy, Kyiv
Usta\$a Monitoring Service